NBC NEWS SPECIAL REPORT - WAR IN AFGHANISTAN BEGINS (10-7-2001)

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From Sunday, October 7th, 2001 NBC NEWS Live coverage of the beginning of U.S military operations in Afghanistan. This is all I have of this NBC NEWS Special Report.

- President George W. Bush addresses the nation at 1:00 P.M E.T
- Coverage runs from 12:52:36 P.M E.T - 1:20:17 P.M E.T

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every reason for the united states to get involved in a place like southern uzbekistan if you look at that map you will see that where we are is a direct line shot to the afghan border first of all about 100 miles and then following on about 300 350 miles directly onto uh kabul in the capital of afghanistan now what's interesting is that below those planes if they in fact do fly use this launch pad here and do fly offensive operations there are no taliban or very few taliban forces along that track you have mostly pro western anti-taliban pro-northern alliance forces all the way down so that would really limit the amount of anti-aircraft fire and the military threat to american planes and pilots tom all right thank you very much nbc jimmy masedo with american troops from the 10th mountain division in uzbekistan we want to go back to nbc's tom aspell now who is in northern afghanistan about 40 miles from the capital city of kabul watching the skies forests tom hi tom well uh more aaa fire going up there just occasional pin pricks of light in the sky now but then about two minutes ago two huge orange flashes from explosions uh presumably just the other side of the mountains which are between us and kabul and we can still see now just the occasional pinprick of light in the sky as obviously the taliban guns searching for some kind of target up there and the light over the plane now behind us you can't see us on this uh video phone at the moment but the the the moon has just risen behind uh just come up from behind the mountains to the east of us and we have a huge plane leading down to a little range of mountains which cut off us from kabul there more flashes of anti-aircraft fire in the sky there that aaa going up as i say presumably looking for targets we have not seen anything other than those two huge orange explosions a few minutes ago but quite obviously an attack on the way we're a little bit too far away we can't hear anything but uh we know that now that the target itself is a couple tom all right thank you very

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is a couple tom all right thank you very much nbc's tom aspel who as i say is in northern afghanistan nbc's dana lewis is at the capitol at the headquarters of the northern alliance that is that organization that has been opposed to the taliban government in kabul it once ran afghanistan for itself dana i know that you've been covering the refugees coming out of there as well what is the sense of the population that is left in kabul after all this evacuation well certainly we've been talking tom even to some of our translators who have come out of there in the last three and four days and they say that things are pretty desperate in kabul there is not a lot of food the population is scared people have been leaving and of course they've been looking forward to some u.n relief that has only gotten in there in the last week but before that of course the taliban had chased out the relief agencies and there is a lot of concern by the relief agencies now that afghanistan is in a pre-famine condition and even if the u.s does these air drops with food there's a big question as to whether they

will get to those people or not they say that they are worried that the taliban will simply steal those stores take that food and use it for its own army the northern alliance was saying by the way earlier tonight tom that they were warning people in kabul to stay in their homes to stay away from military facilities and even go into the bunkers although there is not enough for the population there of uh one million people so there was a lot of caution coming out of here tonight as the northern alliance was told to ground its aircraft by the united states and it did so and the alliance says that not only would kabul be targeted tonight but they were predicting that the city of kandahar which as you know is the capital for the taliban it's their main city that that also would come under attack tonight although we've had no confirmation so far that that has indeed taken place tom all right dana lewis thank you very much with the northern alliance headquarters we're going to go back to islamabad now the pakistan capital city and nbc's ron allen who was

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capital city and nbc's ron allen who was there what about the pakistanis are they getting any coverage of all this on their television tonight yes tom there is some coverage there are several international cable channels that people can see here including al jazeera the 24-hour arab language news channel which has been very influential in this part of the world and bringing to people here and elsewhere events particularly from an arab perspective i know here that people have been anticipating this there's been a lot in the press and a lot on the streets because it seemed that there was momentum building for an american attack the question here i think is how people will react to it the government has done everything it can to lay the groundwork to convince people here that the american attempt to hunt down bin laden is justified but when you go to certain parts of this country particularly up in the town of peshawar near the afghan border it's a town of some 2 million people half the population of afghan refugees who have come across during the past 20 years or so there is a very strong pro-taliban sentiment there there are a lot of people who just cannot believe that osama bin laden and his network are responsible for this those are people who perhaps would never be convinced by any evidence presented to them but i think the pakistani government is going to have a job of trying to essentially sell the evidence that has convinced them to the people they were hoping that there would be more of a public discussion a public disclosure of the evidence of the case against bin laden and his associates particularly up there where again there have been protests there may be more protests uh the government has been on alert uh there have been also a lot of troop movements in that act here in that area and perhaps importantly as well the government has kept that border area sealed now for uh the better part of the month since we have been here uh they were concerned about taliban sympathizers coming across with refugees uh they've also been uh very concerned about weapons coming across and perhaps an uprising in this area tom back to you all right thank you very much nbc's ron allen we expect to hear from the president now at 1 eastern time that's

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president now at 1 eastern time that's about a minute and 30 seconds away let's go briefly to nbc's david gregory who is at the white house david far from ari fleischer the president spokesman who said succinctly we have begun another front in this war on terrorism the president will speak as you mentioned and follow on tim russert's point from earlier administration officials have said that a lot of supporters in this campaign have appreciated the us restraint it's been a major point to get across to the american people and the rest of the world as to why the united states has waited this long before this additional front against terrorism has begun tom uh briefly david before we do hear from the president uh should we expect any surprises in his speech on the diplomatic or political front uh not that we're aware of tom and we're also not expecting a lot of detail about the military operations now underway all right thank you very much nbc david gregory so to bring you quickly up to date uh it's now coming up on one o'clock eastern time in afghanistan because of the time differences it is 9 30 there and a major attack is underway by u.s military forces we're about to get the details on all that from the president of the united states who returned from camp david earlier he'll be addressing the nation from the oval office in his capacity as the chief executive of this country but also as the commander-in-chief of all u.s armed forces and as we have been saying he is also expected to talk good afternoon political terms on my orders the united states military has begun strikes against al-qaeda terrorist

training camps and military installations of the taliban regime in afghanistan these carefully targeted actions are designed to disrupt the use of afghanistan as a terrorist base of operations and to attack the military capability of the taliban regime we are joined in this operation by our staunch friend great britain other close friends including canada australia germany and france have pledged forces as the operation unfolds

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pledged forces as the operation unfolds more than 40 countries in the middle east africa europe and across asia have granted air transit or landing rights many more have shared intelligence we are supported by the collective will of the world more than two weeks ago i gave taliban leaders a series of clear and specific demands closed terrorist training camps hand over leaders of the al qaeda network and return all foreign nationals including american citizens unjustly detained in your country none of these demands were met and now the taliban will pay a price by destroying camps and disrupting communications we will make it more difficult for the terror network to train new recruits and coordinate their evil plans initially the terrorists may burrow deeper into caves and other entrenched hiding places our military action is also designed to clear the way for sustained comprehensive and relentless operations to drive them out and bring them to justice at the same time the oppressed people of afghanistan will know the generosity of america and our allies as we strike military targets we will also drop food medicine and supplies to the starving and suffering men and women and children of afghanistan the united states of america is a friend to the afghan people and we are the friends of almost a billion worldwide who practice the islamic faith the united states of america is an enemy of those who aid terrorists and of the barbaric criminals who profane a great religion by committing murder in its name this military action is a part of our campaign against terrorism another front in a war that has already been joined through diplomacy intelligence the freezing of financial assets and the arrests of known terrorists by law enforcement agents in 38 countries

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38 countries given the nature and reach of our enemies we will win this conflict by the patient accumulation of successes by meeting a series of challenges with determination and will and purpose today we focus on afghanistan but the battle is broader every nation has a choice to make in this conflict there is no neutral ground if any government sponsors the outlaws and killers of innocence they have become outlaws and murderers and they will take that lonely path at their own peril i'm speaking to you today from the treaty room of the white house a place where american presidents have worked for peace we're a peaceful nation yet as we have learned so suddenly and so tragically there can be no peace in a world of sudden terror in the face of today's new threat the only way to pursue peace is to pursue those who threaten it we did not ask for this mission but we will fulfill it the name of today's military operation is enduring freedom we defend not only our precious freedoms but also the freedom of people everywhere to live and raise their children free from fear i know many americans feel fear today and our government is taking strong precautions all our enforcement and intelligence agencies are working aggressively around america around the world and around the clock at my request many governors have activated the national guard to strengthen airport security we have called up reserves to reinforce our military capability and strengthen the protection of our homeland in the months ahead our patients will be one of our strengths patients with the long waits that will result from tighter security patience and understanding that it will take time to achieve our goals patience and all the sacrifices that may come

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come today those sacrifices are being made by members of our armed forces who now defend us so far from home and by their proud and worried families a commander-in-chief sends america's sons and daughters into a battle in a foreign land only after the greatest care and a lot of prayer we ask a lot of those who wear our uniform we ask them to leave their loved ones to travel great distances to risk injury even to be prepared to make the ultimate sacrifice of their lives they are dedicated they are honorable they represent the best of our country and we are grateful to all the men and women in our military every sailor every soldier

every airman every coast guardsman every marine i say this your mission is defined your objectives are clear your goal is just you have my full confidence and you will have every tool you need to carry out your duty i recently received a touching letter that says a lot about the state of america in these difficult times a letter from a fourth grade girl with a father in the military as much as i don't want my dad to fight she wrote i'm willing to give him to you this is a precious gift the greatest she could give this young girl knows what america is all about since september 11 an entire generation of young americans has gained new understanding of the value of freedom and its cost in duty and in sacrifice the battle is now joined on many fronts we will not waver we will not tire we will not falter and we will not fail peace and freedom will prevail thank you may god continue to bless america president george w bush in his capacity as president of the united states also as commander-in-chief updating this

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as commander-in-chief updating this nation on the military action that is now underway designed to disrupt the communication facilities of the taliban and to destroy the training camps we're also getting word that the air base in kandahar which is in the southern part of afghanistan it's a command base that is the headquarters of the taliban officially that that too has been destroyed the president making several points saying that we are joined in this military operation specifically by great britain of course the prime minister of britain tony boyer has been an exceptional friend of the united states during all of this an ambassador to pakistan he's spoken out very strongly on several occasions and we do expect to hear from him for too long as well the president then talked about the food and emergency supplies and medicine that would be dropped to the beleaguered other people in afghanistan reaching out as he has for the last 10 days or so to the islamic people who are not yet committed to the radical view that osama bin laden has so vigorously embraced and he talked about the fear in this country so many americans worrying about another attack of some kind especially now that american military action has begun he talked about the many steps that the administration is taking on that front nbc jimmy kloszewski's at the pentagon now jim what's the assessment so far of the strikes up to this point well according to u.s military officials so far so good it appears that the early strikes uh have hit their intended targets uh it's impossible to tell exactly how precise everything was tom and until they get later bomb damage assessment but we're getting a little more detail now on what the u.s military strikes were aimed at first most critically command and control from which the taliban would direct any kind of military response especially especially air defenses against the u.s early targets also included air defense system and power grids you were there we were hearing reports from the area that

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were hearing reports from the area that cabo went dark that's because the electrical systems there were targeted in those first strikes and in terms of weapons tom that were used initially we're told that the first wave of strikes were conducted with unmanned tomahawk missiles therefore ensuring the safety of any u.s pilots that would come in later uh subsequent waves will include uh such weaponry as uh the b-52 long-range bombers that have been pre-positioned uh in diego garcia and b-2 bombers uh which took off earlier today from their base at whiteman in missouri it's about a an estimated 12 to 15-hour trip over to that region a little less and once they drop their weaponry for today they too will be repositioned in the region for subsequent strikes that will follow in the days ahead also the president it was interesting tom that he would lead uh his speech uh by listing all the allies that are involved uh first of all great britain involved in the in the strikes today canada australia france ready to join in subsequent strikes uh one of the objectives of the administration in the past week or so is to drive home the point that this is not the u.s against any particular country or against the islamic religion but it's the u.s and a broad coalition of countries against terrorism in general and tom you just mentioned ago fears at home while these strikes are underway today there are a number of sporting events across the united states including football and the u.s air force is is flying protective air cover combat air patrol over major sporting events in the united states today tom all right thank you very much nbc's jimmy kloszewski that of course is the stark reality of the world in which we live now that in

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the world in which we live now that in american sporting events wherever large crowds are gathered as a precaution we have a so-called cat mission in which they have combat air patrols overhead to keep an eye out for security as well it does appear now that uh the initial wave of these strikes against command and control centers and the training camps and uh air base in kandahar and the southern part of afghanistan may be over let's go to nbc's tom aspel now who is about 40 miles north of kabul there's a mountain range between him but he has been able to see some activity in the skies what's it like now tom tom very tranquil to the south of us now no more uh anti-aircraft fire that we can see for the moment completely dark actually down to the south there one observation we could make now that we've heard that those first strikes were probably cruise missiles coming into command and control centers uh in kabul uh one of the great differences we've noticed is that the total almost a total lack of fire going up trying to hit those cruise missiles unlike the iraqis when they would get some warning from the south or the or from the east of the country that cruise missiles were on the way uh even though they couldn't see them they would they would hose the skies with triple a fire and indeed on a couple of occasions managed to hit those cruise missiles but the fact that there wasn't much fire going up tonight indicates that there really isn't much communication between the borders and kabul itself to let those gunners know that there's something coming in so we think they're probably just waiting until they heard the sound of them coming in and then putting up as much as they could in the hope that they'd hit something but it was really lacking uh there wasn't anything like the blanket of fire that we'd we'd been waiting to expect there when those first tracks began we did see the orange flashes of two huge explosions down there uh impossible to know of course whether they were secondary explosions we'd have to wait for the bda the bomb damage assessment tomorrow to find out exactly what they'd hit but the uh the thing about the attacks tonight tom just not much fire or and absolutely no missile trails uh going up into the sky over kabul tom all right thank you very much

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kabul tom all right thank you very much nbc's tom aspel general barry mccaffrey is one of our military consultants during the course of this what appears to be a long campaign now general mccaffrey the taliban command and control centers are not terribly sophisticated are they well there's still a lot of equipment there there's probably 600 some odd armored vehicles 40 or 50 aircraft a dozen helicopters there's transmitters these people are like tethered goats waiting for us air and naval power to go after them i think we're seeing again is the first day of the longest campaign these people are about to understand what it feels like to be hunted day and night it can't all be done from the sky at some point however if we are to be successful it's going to mean troops on the ground absolutely i'd be astonished they weren't there already the reconnaissance elements will be keeping these people under observation and it selected periods on the ground in my estimation we can go anywhere in afghanistan in the coming months seize ground hold it accomplish a mission and then come out but at great risk these uh young people and the operatives of the special forces are going to go in and put their lives on the line when they when they land it's uh not too soon to begin preparing the american people for the idea that casualties uh the last couple of uh military actions that the united states has been involved in kosovo notably and troops on the ground just keeping the peace have not involved that but these are the harsh realities of war general yeah no question you know you're going to see u.s army rangers and seals and other special units get on the ground root these people out of caves and kill them at close range it will be very dangerous work but these are enormously well trained well-equipped and determined people that we're putting in action general barry mccaffrey thank you very much he'll continue to be with us during this day and of course during what he describes as this long campaign because it is not over with the capture or the death of osama bin laden in fact former president bill clinton said that would be just the

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clinton said that would be just the beginning not the end uh there are terrorist cells around the world in fact just over the weekend the filipino government uh had what it described as a successful military action against islamic radicals in that country we are expecting shortly to hear from the british prime minister tony blair he'll be addressing us and then this afternoon as well the defense secretary donald rumsfeld and the new chairman of the joint chiefs an air force general by the name of myers will be talking to us as well let's go to nbc's dana lewis now who is at the northern alliance headquarters in afghanistan and dana what are you hearing from the people at the headquarters there about what their next involvement may be well tom i think first of all they say that there are some rules in this and that they have been warning the united states and that is that the u.s will find a lot of friends on the ground here in the short term a lot of people have felt that the rule of the taliban has been extremely harsh and that they will get a lot of sympathy on the ground and help from the northern alliance but there is also a warning that any campaign has to be very careful not to hit civilians otherwise the the us could risk people turning against them on the ground here and also that there is going to be a tremendous wave of refugees some people are talking about a million and a half refugees already on the move and it could increase and don't forget this country's been through four years of drought already so people are desperate the refugee agencies have been kicked out by the taliban in the last few weeks so conditions are severe november the winter is coming and they say that people could turn into it could be a real famine here involving millions of people so as there is great concern that even as this military action is going on tonight that tomorrow we'll see new waves of refugees we should also mention that the taliban of course had moved 8 000 troops up today reinforcing the border next to

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today reinforcing the border next to uzbekistan believing that the u.s troops may cross that border and of course they have long-range artillery and rockets and they say that they will fight the americans while the northern alliance itself which controls 10 percent of this country and has been waiting for a chance to strike the taliban i'd say tom will see action from them very soon if not tomorrow within a matter of days they were moving up extra fuel extra ammunition extra troops some 4 000 on the road just two days ago when we were there they believe that they can hit through punch through the taliban front lines and begin to move into some of the key areas they want to take some of those cities back tom all right thank you very much nbc's dana lewis let's go to uzbekistan now nbc's jim meseta is with some american troops the 10th mountain division that have been deployed there jim what are you hearing joe well tom it's still very quiet here in the skies over this town which we are not allowed to mention for very specific reasons we do not want to pinpoint exactly where we are on the map but it does remain quiet here here although we do know that at least a thousand us troops are well deployed now inside a former soviet air base only about two or three miles behind me but i wanted to pick up on a point if i have time from a point that dana lewis just made we just came a couple of days ago from the iranian afghan border we were up along that border both inside iran and on in no man's land with afghanistan and we were in touch with several militias particularly a militia leader and his son who are preparing they told us and others who have been there recently to move from the west that is from iran into afghanistan as soon as they got the quote green light very similar to what the kla was saying a couple of years ago waiting for those those nato attacks air attacks on kosovo so it's not the only group involved these are this is an anti-taliban pro-shiite group linked to iran but there are other groups as you go around the perimeter

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go around the perimeter periphery of of afghanistan you've got next to us here in tajikistan you've got a protagic ethnic group that is willing to fight against the taliban you have here in uzbekistan a very very large and well-armed group of anti-taliban forces so not only the northern alliance is going to be ready and willing and armed to move down south but you're going to have a pincer effect from the from the the west and from the north and from the northwest as well all these groups moving towards kabul basically liberating areas that were taken from them in 1995 and 1996 by taliban forces tom all right thank you very much nbc jim mercedes i want to go now to general claudia kennedy the retired three-star general the first woman to achieve that status in the u.s army who is deputy chief of staff for intelligence during her tenure at the

pentagon general kennedy target selection is very critical in a first operation like this yes it sure is tom it's very important for us to be able to go in there get the targets that we have selected and then get get out and get out of the way of the people who are going to do the majority of the ground fight on this one but if those training camps as we have been led to understand around kabul and they're within 10 miles of the capital city have been abandoned why would we select them as targets now just to make a point well partly to make a point and partly to destroy the supplies they may have left in place as you're well aware this is a mountainous region and many of these groups both the taliban and the northern alliance leave their supplies pre-positioned in a lot of different locations so it's going to be very important to get every location whether or not there are people in them it's one thing to select a target in a place like kosovo and or in iraq for that matter where you have this broad desert terrain but afghanistan i would think for the

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but afghanistan i would think for the targets selection and intelligence people poses some special problems it sure does it's a it's a very hostile environment in which to operate it's one in which the 10th mountain division is is able to do this because as you can tell from the name they are able to and they train in mountainous areas and they're very well prepared to operate in cold weather environments all right thank you very much general claudia kennedy who also will be here as part of the nbc news team as we continue our coverage of this military operation that now has been launched with the assistance the direct assistance of great britain we do expect to hear from british prime minister tony blair momentarily and then as i say we'll be getting a briefing as well from the defense department to bring you up to date it does now appear that the first wave of attacks has been completed so far so good that's the word from the pentagon there could be a second wave it's now coming up on 10 p.m in afghanistan they are a half an hour difference in their time configuration the capital city of kabul had its lights knocked out thunderous explosions were heard in and around there and we're told as well that a command center in kandahar at the airport there in southern afghanistan which is the home of the taliban that it too has been knocked out the president making clear that we wanted to go after these command and control centers also after the training camps but this will be followed by emergency drops of food medicine and other supplies for the people of afghanistan who are in a near famine condition the tricky piece for the administration obviously has been to have a retaliation uh militarily but at the same time knight not to light the fuse among islamic radicals around the world and more important in many ways not to light the fuse among those people of that faith who may be trying to decide which way they want to go during the course of all of this and as general barry mccaffrey has been

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as general barry mccaffrey has been saying this is the beginning of what promises to be a very long campaign because al qaeda is not the only islamic radical a terrorist group in the world obviously although most organizations and most countries now seem to have been persuaded that osama bin laden was in fact responsible for all this the pakistanis were saying that they had seen enough evidence to indict him even in the last 12 hours or so the taliban ambassador to pakistan was saying we see the need to put him on trial osama bin laden we'd like to do that in afghanistan but we'd like to see the evidence that was widely believed to be a stalling tactic on the part of the taliban president bush has said from the very beginning that there will be no negotiation and he answered them tonight let's go to nbc's ron allen now in islamabad ron tom yes that was a very interesting statement today from the taliban embassy they have made a flurry of statements during the past several weeks each time being a bit more evasive about osama bin laden on one occasion they said for example that they they couldn't find him today they said that yes they made an offer to hold a trial in afghanistan if in fact the united states would formally request that and provide evidence and as you correctly point out the united states has never taken many of these statements very seriously but again the the taliban has been trying consistently to negotiate in a in an odd way about uh trying in some way to to get out of this as their their backs have been pushed closer and closer to the wall a couple other things the taliban have done which are perhaps worth noting today they released a british journalist who had been held

who was arrested about a week or so ago who a journalist who had snuck into the country to try and do her job they released her as a humanitarian gesture perhaps to try and take some of the heat off there's also a lot of concern here in pakistan about eight foreign aid workers who have been

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eight foreign aid workers who have been in detention since august third there are two americans in that group heather mercer and dana curry their parents have been here in islamabad since late august trying to again persuade the taliban to release them on humanitarian grounds we believe that those eight foreigners are perhaps the only westerners who have been in kabul uh during the past a few weeks since just about all the foreign and foreign diplomats and international aid community left that country so there's a lot of concern about their fate now that the attack has started in the capital also a lot of concern in this country about the refugee crisis that dana and others were mentioning in recent weeks the international aid community has been frantic basically at war themselves trying to get supplies into this country to the border and across the border into afghanistan there was a period from september 11th for about three weeks where there were essentially no new food supplies going into afghanistan some of the eight agencies were saying that they were people who were at risk of dying risk of starvation and certainly enduring severe malnutrition because the food stocks have been down to just days in recent weeks they have been trying to get food in but there are huge logistical problems trying to do that they've also been trying to set up camps about a hundred camps on this side of the border should the pakistani government open the border to allow refugees to come here one huge logistical problem they face in pakistan there's no water in those areas they will have to truck water in because there are no ground water supply so this is the fallout that pakistan fears this is what the government here has been bracing it for itself for following any attack because as others have pointed out there could be a million and a half people now streaming to the border trying to get out there have been thousands of people on the move many positioning themselves near the border wondering if pakistan would open the border to allow them into this country pakistan already has some 3 million refugees from afghanistan who have been filtering across here during the past 20 years of civil war and during the past three or four years of a severe drought so that's what this country is now concerned about the refugee crisis and of course dissent it was perhaps important that president bush said that there was going to be

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bush said that there was going to be humanitarian relief going to the afghan people in recent weeks they have lifted sanctions against pakistan they have said that they were going to restructure this country's debt and they were also going to send a lot of economic assistance to pakistan trying to do what it could just to quell any dissent that might be developing in this country because again there is a significant a minority but a significant minority of people in this country who support the taliban remember the taliban movement was born in this country the pakistan government is going to be watching it very closely this to make sure that that dissent remains under control in the coming days tom all right thank you very much nbc's ron allen reporting to us from islamabad tonight we do want to remind you that there has been a first wave of american military strikes against targets in afghanistan in and around kabul and kandahar directed at what are called command and control facilities of the taliban do not have the capacity to direct any aircraft fire and missiles especially at american and allied aircraft some of which will be involved in emergency airlifts before too long to drop not only food but also emergency supplies and medicine to the beleaguered people of that country in this country we've made a quick survey of uh airport activity in and around new york city so far no real change uh combat air patrols we were told by nbc's jim mikloszewski whoever thought it would come to this combat air patrols are in the skies over the various football stadiums across the country today this is after all a sunday and there are large crowds gathered not only at football games but also at a big race today in charlotte north carolina and that is being carried on tnt it was scheduled to be carried here on nbc but it's now being carried on tnt the cable channel so that's where we are we're now awaiting a statement from british prime minister tony blair who was a very close friend of bill clinton's had an early meeting with

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clinton's had an early meeting with george w bush and has been an outspoken advocate of the american position uh during the past uh almost four weeks now making uh an eloquent and impassioned speech uh before his labor party and then of course he went on the road on behalf of this campaign against terror going to islamabad and helping persuade uh america's the people that america wanted to have in his coalition of the evidence against osama bin laden it was tony blair who said that the evidence has been very clear and he made those remarks in an address to the british parliament let's go to nbc's tim russert now tim uh the united states has obviously had a good friend in great britain and it does now appear as well that uh the french and some of our other nato allies are going to be stepping up somewhat more but there has been a reluctance on the part of a number of them to commit any troops to these operations but extremely significant what the president said moments ago tom we had expected great britain canada australia to participate with us they've always been strong and loyal allies when he mentioned the germans and the french i think that was very very important why because germany is intimately involved in this entire situation it appears that some of the plan was hatched in hamburg germany the full support of the german government is vital to breaking these terror networks the french as you well know can be somewhat prickly at certain times but they have a long history of involvement in the arab world the fact that they are aligning themselves so closely with the united states is also extremely important secondly when the president said we had the support of 40 intelligence agencies around the world from various countries that's the kind of support is so vital so necessary we clearly did not have that leading up to september 11 or we would perhaps had a chance of detecting the attacks also i've learned tom that one of the reasons this attack was performed today not only to blow out the taliban's infrastructure but also to get a sense of how the taliban responds how osama bin laden responds and how various

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bin laden responds and how various terrorist cells around the world and in the united states respond on the news of hearing the the results of the attack today if they are in in contact if they are on the move uh look for those 40 intelligence agencies around the world to gather that information share that information and in the president's words try to smoke them out and tim what can we expect politically in the next 24 hours or so in washington on other fronts after all as many people have now guessed that this attack on the world trade center and on the pentagon was so much more effective than even the hijackers could have imagined it's put the american economy into an even deeper tailspin we've gone from having a surplus to having a deficit there's been a huge emotional toll across this country as well what's uh on schedule for congress in the next several days tom the bipartisanship will continue speaker of the house dennis hassert and democratic leader dick gebhardt are going to go to wall street tomorrow to open up the stock exchange together in a very important gesture on this day considering the attacks this morning but there are very strong concerns in washington about a recession and not just a national recession the united states but a global recession and they know if they're going to try to improve the living conditions in afghanistan or try to bring about democratic and societal reforms in the arab states of egypt and jordan and saudi arabia it's going to take money and it's going to take a strong and vibrant economy so it's extremely difficult to have a war and a global recession and enact the kind of changes you need there are also considerable dates debates in the united states about the federal takeover security at airports between democrats and republicans and the kind of a stimulus package to get our own economy going but look for all that to be secondary you'll see nothing but unqualified loyalty over the next several days at least as the commander-in-chief orders this military attack all right thank you very much nbc tim russett we're now being told by

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tim russett we're now being told by jimmy kluszewski and tammy cupperman who worked for us at the pentagon that they're hearing from senior american military officials that it is highly unlikely that american forces would enter afghanistan from uzbekistan because that border is so heavily mined the 10th mountain division team that is in uzbekistan is there to provide force protection for the american military force we do think that there could already be special operation forces in afghanistan others when they go in there will probably go in in an airdrop of some kind something reminiscent of the special forces that were dropped

some of them into panama obviously and it goes back to world war ii when they were such an important part of the force but now we have these special forces and there are a number of them the army rangers the green beret and especially delta force that unique uh group of warriors that is based at fort bragg they have been missing from there from their normal activities for several weeks now and everyone expects that they are somewhere if not in the if not in afghanistan itself but probably in the theater we want to go to nbc's dana lewis now who is the headquarters of the northern alliance and dana we have a camera trained on the distant skies there it's a night scope camera we want to provide a little perspective for our viewers if you will if you begin to see lots of green lights that does not mean it's an explosion correct that's right tom that is a light amplifier it is a second uh camera which we have here and essentially it will pick up any light illumination at all as you know we're about 20 miles south of the tajikistan border in northern afghanistan and that camera is pointed west right now and about 12 miles off in the distance is the front that's where northern alliance troops some eight to ten thousand of them are lined up against taliban forces twelve thousand or so on the taliban side and if there is any large explosion in that area that camera should pick it up i can tell you

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camera should pick it up i can tell you that just about two minutes ago we heard a very loud explosion off in the distance it seemed to be coming from that area to the west it is difficult to know what that was though like often we hear artillery exchanges here there were some earlier today but that was a loud explosion louder than i've heard in the last few days but we couldn't see any anything on that camera we couldn't see any light illumination it may just be regular fire exchanges between those two forces there and the northern alliance has been saying that the moment the u.s started any military action they would try to advance against the taliban they may be doing that tonight or they may be simply having an exchange of artillery fire and gunfire tonight as things are very tense off in that distance on that camera 12 miles down the road from us tom all right thank you very much nbc's dana lewis u.s military officials say that the british participated directly in these initial military attacks by providing submarines for the launch of the tomahawk cruise missiles which were such a critical component uh during the gulf war uh a strategy very similar to this one obviously you take out command and control the missile sites and you take out the resupply depots that they may have stash around the mountainous areas in kabul before you begin any action on the ground in this case also before they begin sending airplanes over so that they can drop emergency food medicine and other supplies to the people on the ground let's go to nbc's ron allen now in islamabad who has some late developments for us ron tom we're just hearing a response to all this more defiance from the taliban a spokesperson down in quetta which is a pakistani city that's just across the border from afghanistan just across from kandahar that spokesperson is saying that although there has been an attack he is insisting that the missiles that were fired did not hit kabul nor did they hit kandahar he is saying that they landed

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kandahar he is saying that they landed in the desert and in the mountains saying essentially that there has been no damage now whether that's true or not of course is um is debatable the the taliban has been defiant throughout this and is now insisting publicly the first statements we're hearing here in pakistan that in fact this attack has been of no consequence to them essentially is what he's saying we're also hearing from the pakistani military here sources they're telling us that the nation here is quiet tonight uh there is apparently no curfew in effect although there had been a discussion today that we were hearing kind of rumors that the pakistani government was considering imposing a curfew there was even some some discussion about imposing martial law but but we have not gone that far the government is insisting that things are quiet tonight but they are also cautioning that the police and the military will be out in force tomorrow and that they have forbidden any public demonstrations and a response to to what's happened in afghanistan tonight tom all right uh thank you very much nbc's ron allen tonight in islamabad we want to go to neil livingston now who is one of america's most recognized authorities on this kind of terrorism that we have all been witness to and how we can best prepare for it there was the unsettling news out of washington last week that intelligence officials from the administration told members of congress in a secret meeting that there was almost a 100 percent expectation that there would be some kind of other attack in this country mr livingston what should

the american citizen do to minimize the possibility that he or she will be exposed to that well i don't think that the average citizen can do very much to prevent terrorist attacks i think this is something the government has to do law enforcement authority authorities are in a very high state of alert today knowing that there would be a high potential for retaliation if not here someplace abroad that's why we have aircraft flying over stadiums today that's why we're probably uh looking to see if any of these groups any of these cells in the united states have unusual movement today or they

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have unusual movement today or they start communicating with each other in some way these uh initial military actions could be helpful to domestic intelligence and determining what these cells are up to couldn't it they certainly could be and uh there are probably a lot of federal authorities in place today uh uh that don't have enough evidence to really to move against some of these groups and they're going to wait and see if indeed they see what appears to be illegal action today because we have to remember here in the united states we're bound by const the constitution we have very uh specific procedures uh that uh we're not at a state of war here at home we have to move in a legal fashion against any terrorist actions on our own territory when members of congress were told last week that there was a very high expectation that there would be another attack was that based on past patterns do you think or was it based on hard intelligence or was it just cautionary well i think it's a bit of all three tom but uh we know that we've got terrorist fugitives in the united states that we cannot find people that the investigation so far has linked to the al qaeda network and we think they're here perhaps to carry out additional terrorist attacks and uh we're not certain where they are and we have ample evidence to suggest uh that there there may have been some planning and pre-positioning already of the kinds of assets that they need to carry out future attacks all right thank you very much nbc's uh security and intelligence consultant neil livingston who's joining us today we want to go back to uzbekistan now on nbc jimmy seda who is there not too far for where members of the 10th mountain division are dug in and jim we're told that they are there to provide force protection for american military forces what does that mean that's correct tom well force protection in the sense that they would occupy the base where they are at uh and provide

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base where they are at uh and provide protection for any troops any other kinds of troops coming in and out of that former soviet base also and just if not more significantly they would be used for rescue for search and rescue operations if there are special forces inside afghanistan american forces or allied forces that fall that are that are in trouble that are downed by afghanistan triple a or any kind of of offensive or counter offensive they would be brought out by these uh by the 10th mountain division and brought back to safety inside afghanistan inside of uzbekistan or elsewhere so that would be the defensive role that it would serve and of course they're going to be involved as well in that humanitarian effort that jim miklaszewski made reference to earlier on we understand that there will be high altitude uh food aid drops by u.s military originating from ramstein air force base in germany uh over afghanistan and that some in certain ways logistical ways the uh the 10th mountain will be involved as well but i want to pick up at another point that jim made earlier on that it is true that it's unlikely that u.s ground troops would move on the ground from uzbekistan into afghanistan because the uzbekist did mine and mine that area in a huge way when it had so many problems with the taliban and the taliban supported groups that were moving up towards the north into uzbekistan however it's not unlikely at all and military analysts have confirmed this that we may see in the days and weeks ahead f-15s and f-16 fighter jets coming landing and using as a launch pad this soviet air base about two miles from us they could be used to escort uh the uh 10th of mountain division on its uh search and rescue operations and it could be used to hit and soften up certain afghan positions as well and what in this world now that we've seen since september 11 where former enemies are

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september 11 where former enemies are now working together what stranger bedfellows than the president of uzbekistan islam karimov and the united states of america so it's the first time ever tom that u.s troops have come in mass and come at all into a former soviet state to deploy tom all right thank you very much nbc jim meseta for those of you who are watching us in southern california a disquieting moment not so long ago in los angeles they had a small earthquake a tremor was felt in the southern california basin but it was only 2.9 on the richter scale we're told and there's been no damage or injuries reported jimmyceda was just referring to the curious new world in which we are occupying these days since september 11th uh president george w bush phoned his russian counterpart vladimir putin to inform him about the military attack on afghanistan shortly before the offensive began according to top kremlin aide on sunday putin obviously has been a very strong ally of president bush in speaking out against terrorism he has his own long and very costly war going on in chechnya right now we believe that the united states has been using um russian military and intelligence sources in afghanistan after its long and costly war in that country vladimir putin and the president have been talking more probably in the last several days than any russian chief and an american president since anyone can possibly remember and of course we'll all wonder how that relationship will emerge at the end of all this whenever that end may be let's go to nbc's dawn for tangelo now who is in london as we await the statement of the british prime minister tony blair because british forces did participate in all this uh dawn tell me about the british press and the television reports in the past couple of weeks and the outspoken support that tony blair has

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outspoken support that tony blair has given the united states very much criticism there of that well um he did take a few um there was criticism of some of his speech but for the most part his approval ratings have been soaring here after that speech as you know tom you've alluded to that speech on tuesday prime minister blair and that moving speech to the labour party said that great britain will be with the united states from the start and will be there until the very end as we've confirmed u.s military officials have confirmed and downing street 10 downing street has also confirmed that british forces have participated in the tomahawk cruise missile strikes some of the missiles were launched from submarines that are stationed nearby british submarines that are stationed nearby in the meanwhile tony blair has been on a whirlwind diplomatic tour in the last few weeks trying to shore up support for this strike he was traveling to russia to india and just days ago to pakistan his stirring speech before the labor party was the best proof that great britain is the strongest ally he also wanted to tell the people of great britain that it was very important that great britain support the united states that our cultures are intertwined and that was the reason why although people may be on edge that was the reason why he believed great britain should take part in this um in the initial phase we've learned that british troops as you said have been involved in the region british forces have an aircraft carrier also the british submarines that are said to have been involved in launching some of those tomahawk missiles u.s military officials have confirmed that as well as 10 downing street also in the area harrier fighter jets and about 20 000 british soldiers now the british military has been careful to say that the exercises that were taking part in oman were not an indication at all that those troops would be involved in any ground activity and there have been reports for weeks that the sas it's the elite british special forces unit have been in

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special forces unit have been in afghanistan along with u.s special forces likely gaining any kind of reconnaissance trying to gain information on possible military targets um prime minister tony blair is expected to talk about this these initial strikes anytime we should be hearing from him from 10 downing street tom all right thank you very much nbc's dawn fartangelo who's on duty for us in london tonight it does appear to be quiet now in the area around kabul it uh it may be that there was just going to be one attack one wave of attacks and now the second one is scheduled let's see if we can pick up something on all of that from nbc jim mklachewski at the pentagon jim tom things may be quiet for now but it's definitely not over we're told that airstrikes will continue uh throughout the day today our time and at at least for several more hours uh to be followed at the end of the day uh by the first of what should be many food drops uh to the

afghan refugees uh uh to confirm what don had said a minute ago the in fact uh yes uh us and british special forces we're told have been in the region for some time uh to provide reconnaissance surveillance uh we're told also that in regard to the forces up in uzbak uzbekistan the former soviet republic perched there strategically just north of afghanistan that there are some special forces there and the 1 000 troops from the 10th mountain army division are not some kind of invasion force there but are there to provide force protection for u.s military planes helicopters and forces there interestingly just a couple of days ago secretary rumsfeld was there in uzbekistan and in an extraordinary press conference there with the president islam karimov uh he announced a number of uh things that uzbekistan would do to help the u.s military he said at the

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help the u.s military he said at the time that uh at the time he said we're not quite ready yet to allow offensive strikes to be launched from uzbeki uzbekistan territory but u.s officials are confident that karimov will allow that to happen if and so when the united states need to needs to do that but in terms of any ground invasion by u.s troops that's highly unlikely tom very difficult to do the borders along uzbekistan and afghanistan are heavily mined on both sides if and when special forces actually go on the ground to pursue these terrorist cells in osama bin laden and to be backed up by some ground troops perhaps the 82nd airborne is is was in early planning those troops would most likely be dropped in once the ground is sufficiently softened and safe enough for some kind some kind of airdrop into that area tom all right thank you very much nbc's uh jim aseda giving us a heads up that more airstrikes are expected during our time it's now nighttime in afghanistan and that will be followed by the first drops of emergency food medicine and other supplies for the people in afghanistan any of whom are in a semi-famine condition these are not necessarily the taliban these are other tribal members who have been living there for a long long time and are caught now in the winds of war with nothing to eat and no as we say medicine supplies to give you eye an idea of the perilous nature of the landscape in afghanistan it's not only mountainous and very rugged terrain but bob windrum one of our associates here says that u.s intelligence estimates that up to one-fifth of the world's land mines are scattered throughout afghanistan the number of unexploded mines in afghanistan may range as high as 20 million or one-fifth of them 100 million believed to be scattered around the world that is an exceptionally high number but it has been a battle zone for

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number but it has been a battle zone for the past 25 years or so now let's go to nbc's tom aspell who is about 40 miles north of kabul and he's been keeping his eye on the mountain race that separates him from that capital city any additional activity in the skies tom no tom still tranquil down to the south there uh we're just looking back though over the strikes over the last hour or so when they came in here the uh the absence of very much anti-aircraft fire going up into the sky they're suggesting two things to us thank you tom we're going to go to tony blair now president bush military action against targets inside afghanistan has begun i can confirm that uk forces are engaged in this action i want to pay tribute if i might right at the outset to britain's armed forces there is no greater strength for a british prime minister and the british nation at a time like this than to know that the forces we are calling upon are amongst the very best in the world they and their families are of course carrying an immense burden at this moment and will be feeling deep anxiety as will the british people but we can take pride in their courage their sense of duty and the esteem with which they're held throughout the world no country lightly commits forces to military action and the inevitable risks involved but we made it clear following the attacks upon the united states on september the 11th that we would take part in action once it was clear who was responsible there is no doubt in my mind nor in the mind of anyone who has been through all the available evidence including intelligence material that these attacks were carried out by the al-qaeda network masterminded by osama bin laden equally it is clear

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it is clear that his network is harbored and supported by the taliban regime inside afghanistan it is now almost a month since the atrocity occurred it is more than two weeks since an ultimatum was delivered to the taliban to yield up the terrorists or face the consequences it is clear beyond doubt that they will not do this they were given the choice of siding with justice or siding with terror and they chose to side with terror there are three parts all equally important to the operation which we're engaged military diplomatic and humanitarian the military action we are taking will be targeted against places we know to be involved in the al-qaeda network of terror or against the military apparatus of the taliban this military plan has been put together mindful of our determination to do all we humanly can to avoid civilian casualties i cannot disclose obviously how long this action will last but we will act with reason and resolve we have set the objectives to eradicate uzama bin laden's network of terror and to take action against the taliban regime that is sponsoring him as to the precise british involvement i can confirm that last wednesday the united states government made a specific request that a number of uk military assets be used in the operation which has now begun and i gave authority for these assets to be deployed they include the base of diego garcia reconnaissance and other aircraft and missile firing submarines the missile firing submarines are in use tonight the air assets will be available for use in the coming days

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in the coming days the united states are obviously providing the bulk of the force required and leading this operation but this is an international effort as well as the uk france germany australia and canada have also committed themselves to take part in it on the diplomatic and political front in the time i've been prime minister i cannot recall a situation that has commanded so quickly such a powerful coalition of support and not just from those countries directly involved in military action but from many others in all parts of the world that coalition as i believe strengthened not weakened in the 26 days since the atrocity occurred and this is in no small measure due to the statesmanship of president bush to whom i pay tribute tonight the world understands that whilst of course there are dangers in acting the dangers of inaction are far far greater the threat of further such outrages the threat to our economies the threat to the stability of the world on the humanitarian front we are assembling a coalition of support for refugees in and outside afghanistan which is as vital as the military coalition even before september the 11th four million afghans were on the move there are two million refugees in pakistan and one and a half million in iran we have to act for humanitarian reasons to alleviate the appalling suffering of the afghan people and to deliver stability so that people from that region stay in that region britain of course is heavily involved in that humanitarian effort so we are taking action therefore on all those three fronts military diplomatic and humanitarian i also want to say very directly to the

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i also want to say very directly to the british people why this matters so much directly to britain first let us not forget that the attacks of the september the 11th represented the worst terrorist outrage against british citizens in our history the murder of british citizens whether it happens overseas or not is an attack upon britain but even if no british citizen had died it would be right to act this atrocity was an attack on us all on people of all faiths and people of none we know the al-qaeda network threatened europe including britain and indeed any nation throughout the world that does not share their fanatical views so we have a direct interest in acting in our own self-defense to protect british lives it was also an attack not just on lives but on livelihoods we can see since the 11th of september how economic confidence has suffered with all that means for british jobs and british industry our prosperity and standard of living therefore require us to deal with this terrorist threat we act also because the al-qaeda network and the taliban regime are funded in large part on the drugs trade 90 percent of all the heroin sold on british streets originates from afghanistan stopping that trade is again directly in our interests i wish to say finally as i've said many times before that this is not a war with islam it angers me as it angers the vast majority of muslims to hear bin laden and his associates described as islamic terrorists

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terrorists they are terrorists pure and simple islam is a peaceful and tolerant religion and the acts of these people are wholly contrary to the teachings of the quran these are difficult and testing times therefore for all of us people are bound to be concerned about what the terrorists may seek to do in response i should say there is at present no specific credible threat to the uk that we know of and that we have in place tried and tested contingency plans which are the best possible response to any further attempts at terror this of course is a moment of the utmost gravity for the world none of the leaders involved in this action want war none of our nations wanted we are a peaceful people but we know that sometimes to safeguard peace we have to fight britain has learned that lesson many times before in our history we only do it if the cause is just but this cause is just the murder of almost 7 000 innocent people in america was an attack on our freedom our way of life and attack on civilized values the world over we waited so that those responsible could be yielded up by those shielding them that offer was refused we have now no choice so we will act and our determination and acting is total we will not let up or rest until our objectives are met in full thank you british prime minister tony blair speaking from number 10 downing the official residence of the british prime minister obviously about the role of great britain and all of this the wider charge that must be felt

01:08:01 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2ndbfr1qrkE&t=4081s)

this the wider charge that must be felt around the world to all free thinking people everywhere he talked about the importance that this war must be won he said that he was offended by the idea that this was a war against islam or that this was islamic terrorism it is terrorism pure and simple he also paid tribute to the statesmanship of george w bush the president of the united states saying that he cannot recall a coalition so powerful that came together so swiftly as this one has it has only grown in strength the british armed forces did provide submarines for the launch of tomahawk cruise missiles against those sites that were hit tonight in and around kabul and kandahar in the southern part of afghanistan he made it very clear that the taliban had ample opportunity to turn over osama bin laden to separate themselves from them but instead they chose to side with terror and they will pay the price for all that as i say that tony blair has been one of the president's strongest allies in all of us a very conspicuous representative of the coalition is he has traveled to the subcontinent to make the case with the pakistanis particularly and it was one of his predecessors from another part of the british political spectrum margaret thatcher who said to this president's father george herbert walker bush at the time that iraq invaded kuwait don't go wobbly on us george and it was not too long after that that the battle plans for a desert storm were organized they were already in under consideration obviously and great britain was a great ally of the united states during all that as well so so much of the world has changed obviously in almost four weeks now but so much of it remains the same the united states and great britain still have this very strong kinship let's go to nbc jimmy kloszewski now and get the very latest for us on the first wave of attacks what's the assessment if you have any at all jim well so far according to u.s military officials uh they believe so far so good there are some early

01:10:01 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2ndbfr1qrkE&t=4201s)

far so good there are some early indications that they've hit exactly the kind of targets they wanted to hit early on uh and that is command and control centers some air defense sites and power grids in the capital of kabul also the defense ministry there the taliban defense ministry also targeted in this early wave of strikes now according to u.s officials i know there appears to these air strikes appear to be over but that's not the case apparently uh the first wave of air strikes was conducted from u.s navy ships and submarines and as we heard prime minister blair say a minute ago from british submarines in the indian ocean pretty much exclusively tomahawk missiles tom that were launched from these ships uh in the indian ocean it's not clear although in this first package of air strikes uh it is also supposed to include uh some standoff bombing from b-52 long-range bombers that were flown over to the region some time ago and again as uh prime minister blair indicated are based at the island of uh diego garcia there in the indian ocean uh and b-2 bombers which took off very early this morning from the united states were to make a b-line uh several refuelings in the process b-line for afghanistan to drop their weapons and they too will eventually be based at diego garcia for several days of bombing that is to follow now it was very important for the united states to have tony blair come out and announce that the british are taking part as the prime minister himself said this is primarily a

u.s operation but that contribution the international contribution is very important uh in driving home the message from the united states president bush secretary rumsfeld that this is not the u.s against afghanistan but it is a broad coalition

01:12:00 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2ndbfr1qrkE&t=4320s)

afghanistan but it is a broad coalition the world if you will focused against terrorism the initial targets here besides command and control those that network of terrorist camps even though many of them were evacuated before september 11 the attacks on the us and in the days following there were strong indications that there was was still quite a bit of activity in some of these camps and if nothing else it will take out the infrastructure of the talib of the al qaeda terrorist network following several days of air strikes there could be a low and then what happens after that time we may never hear about that is special forces operations once the ground is softened enough considered safe enough for u.s ground troops to be air dropped in to provide to to establish some kind of base in the area from which to operate perhaps to allow those special forces to go to work in search of bin laden and the al-qaeda tom all right thank you very much nbc jim miklaszewski just to bring you up to date we did hear from president george w bush about an hour ago now and he was speaking in his capacity as the president of the united states but also as commander-in-chief here is some of what he had to say to the nation from the white house since september 11 an entire generation of young americans has gained new understanding of the value of freedom and its cost in duty and in sacrifice the battle is now joined on many fronts we will not waver we will not tire we will not falter and we will not fail peace and freedom will prevail president also made it clear that what follows after these attacks on the command and control centers and on the training camps will be the relief supplies in the form of food and medicine and other emergency supplies for those people in afghanistan who are so desperately in need of all that this is going to be a kind of iron fist and a velvet glove approach because with the united states

01:14:00 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2ndbfr1qrkE&t=4440s)

approach because with the united states and its allies don't want to have happen is for the islamic world to be inflamed by military action so they're working very hard diplomatically and politically and from a humanitarian point of view as well to say that this is not a war against islam it's a war against as tony boyer put it terrorist pure and simple let's go to nbc's ron allen now who is in islamabad the taliban have already had a response i gather run tom a lot of responses there are a number of taliban officials who are here in pakistan because this country is now the only country in the world that recognizes the taliban regime and has diplomatic relations so there are a number of taliban officials who are making quite defiant statements there's no sign of surrender from the taliban here tonight let me read you some of what they're saying one official is saying the taliban will fight to the last breath they're saying that they quote cannot hand over bin laden i translate that to mean that they will not hand over bin laden uh the taliban ambassador here is saying what happened across the border was a quote terrorist act by the british and u.s governments and that the united states will not achieve its aims by acting this way and in karachi a troubling statement from a taliban official there who was condemning the attack and calling for a jihad or holy war essentially karachi is the largest city in pakistan and you may remember that three weeks ago there were some very very violent protests there in which four people were killed the most violent protests that this nation has seen by pro-taliban forces who are against this government's decision to support america in the hunt for bin laden we're also hearing tonight that there are some indications that pakistani air space was used for attacks we contacted an interior ministry official here and he basically said well use your common sense if you think whether or not pakistani airspace was used that was one of the conditions that the united states laid out a long time ago one of the demands or requests that the u.s government laid out some time ago to the pakistani government in enlisting its support for help in

01:16:00 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2ndbfr1qrkE&t=4560s)

in enlisting its support for help in these attacks the u.s government also asked it asked of course for logistics help and intelligence support we're also hearing tonight that several key airports in pakistan have been closed in lahore and the capital islamabad we've been hearing all day that in quetta a key city because it's across the border and very close to kandahar the taliban stronghold in afghanistan that that city had been closed down at the airport but a number of neighborhoods near the airport had been evacuated and there are some indications that that airport may have been used in some way perhaps to to facilitate the attacks that might have been taking that have been taking place tonight again no details on that but it seems clear from what we're hearing now that the pakistani government and its military and its airports were on alert during the attacks that the government here has been trying to crack down on dissent they have not declared martial law they have not imposed a curfew but we are hearing warnings that the military and the police will be out in force here tomorrow and i might also point out that all this information uh the taliban response and what the government has been doing is being widely disseminated here pakistani tv a state-run channel is has been carrying uh international cable broadcasts from around the world so the pakistani people and the taliban supporters among them although they are a small minority are quite well informed about what has been happening tonight and this country is now bracing for any fallout tomorrow tom all right thank you very much nbc's ron allen and to repeat something that happened in this country shortly after the attacks there was a small earthquake a tremor really in los angeles in the southern california basin there about a mile west of silver lake which is very near downtown los angeles no damage or injuries reported but obviously it had to be a disquieting moment for southern californians who may have been worried about some kind of reprisal on the part of other terrorist organizations once the military attacks began the fbi is saying that there have been no reports of any kind of unusual activity today

01:18:01 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2ndbfr1qrkE&t=4681s)

activity today no signs of any reprisals in any words but everyone is expected and requested to exercise as i'm sure they are all do caution it's also worth pointing out the combat air patrols are flying over the various football stadia in america today where professional football games are underway and probably in other areas as well robert mueller who is the director of the fbi is in his office at this time we do think that the second wave of attacks and jimmy kloszewski has been telling us that we do should expect these attacks continued throughout the day will happen more in the south this time near the city of kandahar which is the headquarters of the taliban i'm going to do a little illustrator for you if i can hear that's down here we were told that the command base at the kandahar airport was taken out the taliban have confirmed that the tower there was damaged most of the bombing most of the first wave of attacks have been around the capital of kabul it is this area up in here that is controlled by the northern alliance obviously it's a very small area there's a mountain range between that area and kabul uh and if there's going to be any penetration by the northern alliance it would be through the mountainous passes there this is the border with uzbekistan right along there that is believed to be heavily mined uzbekistan has provided from some support facilities for the 10th mountain division which is there to provide force protection for american forces but the penetration by the part of uh american and perhaps british special forces which may have already occurred is expected to be from the air that is that they'll parachute into those areas that includes delta force the seals the uh the army rangers and other forces of that kind joined by the special units of the british at the beginning and perhaps others as we go along the british plainly were involved

01:20:00 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2ndbfr1qrkE&t=4800s)

along the british plainly were involved today with the provided by providing submarines for the launch of tomahawk cruise missiles the weapon that we became so familiar with during the course of operation desert storm let's go to nbc's tom aspell now who is in that area that is controlled by the northern alliance tom tom i think one of the things the military planners are going to be quite pleased about really is the lack of heavy anti-aircraft fire coming up to meet those cruise missiles as they struck kabul just over an hour ago and that's going to tell them one or two things one that the taliban is either conserving its ammunition and waiting for aircraft to come in and make more conventional strikes more of a chance of hitting those or two that simply the taliban don't have any idea of where to fire or no direction finding equipment no working radar equipment

to try and find those incoming vehicles now we noticed during the uh during the strikes there were just little scattered bursts of aaa fire up in the sky over kabul there and then one or two huge explosions uh suggesting to us cruise missiles that probably uh struck either command and control centers or radar centers there now we know that as far as taliban anti-aircraft defenses are concerned that they do have several batteries of 20 and 30 millimeter cannon most of them they've been used mounted on the backs of trucks and used as ground assault weapons more than anti-aircraft defense weapons so i think the military plan would be rather pleased that there wasn't a huge volume of fire going up there you recall during the gulf war ten years ago even when cruise missiles were used against iraqi positions the iraqis always seem to fill the sky with the anti-aircraft fire and the hope that they'd tip one of those cruise missiles off course and direct uh directed away from its target there there hasn't even from what we could see from this distance there hasn't even been an attempt by the taliban to do that so that either suggests that their supplies are low or that they simply don't have the anti-aircraft defenses to go up against these incoming weapons tom all right thank you very much nbc's tom asphalt of course it uh

01:22:01 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2ndbfr1qrkE&t=4921s)

asphalt of course it uh it is one of the most unsettling sites that any population can see when a cruise missile comes overhead uh during daylight hours they're very visible they do a right-hand turn and then a left-hand turn and go directly to the target and not necessarily at supersonic speed they're often can be spotted in the skies when they're headed for their targets let's go to nbc's dana lewis now who has been hearing some activity in his area dana well tom we've been hearing a number of explosions uh i'd say two or three in the last hour uh to the west of us towards the front where the taliban and the northern alliance are lined up together we haven't seen any flashes of light off in that area it is very difficult to tell what it is it may just be a ground fire which takes place at night between the tank and artillery units that are lined up against the taliban some 8 000 forces on this side of the northern alliance the anti-taliban force and some 10 to 12 000 on the other side belonging to the talibans and of course that is a very difficult area where we've been over there and we've seen some refugees moving across that place at night time they don't go during the day because they say that the taliban will arrest them and will punish them for trying to leave taliban controlled areas so what they do is they try to walk across these minefields that you were talking about earlier tonight there are many of them here and we've seen people in the hospitals here people who are trying to flee with their belongings and flee with their families that they will go into the hospital and they will lose limbs as they walk across those minefields just to get away from the taliban and they say tom that the taliban really has been on a campaign of terror over the last several weeks they've been trying to force people to go to the front they've been coming door to door telling refugees that they have to leave their homes they have to come up with weapons telling them to they they should report to an area within 24 hours with a gun of

01:24:00 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2ndbfr1qrkE&t=5040s)

to an area within 24 hours with a gun of some kind and then they are taking people as young as 13 according to the refugees that we've talked to and sending them to the front there are also civilian population areas that have come under bombardment by artillery by the taliban inside their own areas and there have been all sorts of stories of some of the ethnic minorities being chased out by the taliban recently who have been worried that there could be a possible uprising when american military action happened so tajiks and uzbeks who have been coming through the refugee camps here have been telling me that they have had to leave in some cases one man told me he came here i brought his daughter and his wife then went back to get their personal possessions and they found that the taliban had been burning homes inside those areas it's difficult to know exactly what's going on there because a lot of the aid agencies that had been working in there were also chased out by the taliban over the last several weeks the taliban also went into their aid agency headquarters they seized communication gear they looted some of the offices according to the aid agencies and they also took all of the food and while we talk about the great refugee problem that is here prime minister tony blair referred to it and of course the president bush is talking about air strikes here it really is a terrible humanitarian catastrophe in the making uh 1.5 million people likely on the move and it's just going to get worse as winter approaches here so it is a real concern and the the question now is of

course the united states wants to reach out to these people and let them know that they are targeting the taliban or targeting osama bin laden and they do not mean to harm the civilian population here but surely in the coming days we're going to see more people leaving those cities and will any of these air drops get to those people the humanitarian aid agencies believe that the taliban will likely take a lot of that food and try to feed their own forces try to feed their army on the ground tom thank you very much nbc's dana lewis talking about the additional problem

01:26:00 (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2ndbfr1qrkE&t=5160s)

talking about the additional problem obviously with the enormous number of refugees who are on the border or just inside of pakistan we heard references to that as well from uh british prime minister tony blair let's talk now with retired air force major general perry smith former commandant of the national war college first of all uh if you can general let's talk about the risk of flying emergency relief missions over afghanistan even after this first wave of attacks how great is that risk well it that risk is not very high tom because they're going to be dropping the humanitarian stuff the medicines of food and all that in areas where the air defense system is pretty weak and they're not many taliban forces so they're they've carefully worked out the plan to drop the humanitarian food in areas that it can be best used by people in desperate shape and be not well used by the taliban and not to put their airplanes at risk so the risk is very very low from an air point of view do we have enough access to enough air facilities in the region during the gulf war obviously we use saudi arabia as a big air base we use the gulf states as well what about this time yeah we have we have plenty of bases and of course the air campaign will not be anywhere near as extensive remember tom we had 2500 3 000 sorties a day during the gulf war this is going to be a much lower number of sorties although the sorties will be much more effective because almost all the weapons will be precision weapons where in the gulf war only nine percent were precision weapons and we might want to go through those weapons the the new one which was used in the war in kosovo was a j dam which is a a maneuverable uh

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